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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MAPUTO 001335

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MCC FOR BRIGGS, GAULL

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MZ](#) [DHLAKAMA](#) [RENAMO](#)

SUBJECT: RENAMO CANDIDATE DHALAKAMA ON U.S. TRIP, CAMPAIGN

REF: A. MAPUTO 1196

[1](#)B. MAPUTO 1154

Classified By: AMBASSADOR HELEN LA LIME, REASON 1.5(d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: In a September 29 meeting with Ambassador La Lime, RENAMO presidential candidate Afonso Dhlakama outlined the themes of democracy and the need for transparent elections that he had emphasized in his recent visit to the United States. He was pleased with the visit and said he had found greater sympathy than on previous visits. Dhlakama said that, although RENAMO's strength was in rural areas, his support in cities was increasing. In statements to the Ambassador and the press, he has acknowledged the popularity of outgoing president Chissano and has contrasted FRELIMO candidate Guebuza with Chissano. He downplayed the August violence in Sofala province and said he did not expect violence to be a problem in the campaign or the election. Dhlakama was not as focused in this meeting as he was in the U.S., and his party faces several obstacles, including a lack of resources and the advantages to FRELIMO of incumbency. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Ambassador La Lime met with opposition RENAMO party leader and presidential candidate Afonso Dhlakama on September 29 to discuss Dhlakama's recent trip to the U.S. and the December 1-2 national elections. Dhlakama expressed pleasure with his visit, especially with the Republican convention and his meetings with USG officials and on the Hill. He said he had emphasized that if elected, RENAMO would respect agreements made by the FRELIMO government. He also had called for help in increasing the credibility and transparency of Mozambique's elections and had stressed that RENAMO would not seek to take power by force. Dhlakama said he had put Mozambique in a regional context for his Washington interlocutors, citing the importance for South Africa and other countries in the region of a successful example of change of ruling party by elections and the need to prevent Zimbabwe from becoming the model for the region. He said he found greater sympathy from his audiences on this trip than on previous ones. (Comment: This tracks with a comment FRELIMO candidate Armando Guebuza made in his Sept. 4 meeting with the Ambassador (ref a), that he had found greater sympathy for Mozambique during his July-August visit to the U.S. than on earlier visits. End Comment.)

[1](#)3. (C) Dhlakama said RENAMO was poor in resources but rich in popular support. He said that his support was mostly rural, especially among followers of traditional cultures whom FRELIMO had alienated. However, he said that stolen (his word) internal FRELIMO polling data indicated that his support was rising in cities. He claimed that city residents generally viewed outgoing President Chissano as a great man and liked him somewhat more than they did Dhlakama, whom he said they liked much more than they did Guebuza. Dhlakama claimed Guebuza was a dictator who lacked support within FRELIMO, was anti-white, and was a drug trafficker.

[1](#)4. (C) Dhlakama said his priorities if elected would be: replacing FRELIMO domination of the government with non-partisan government; promoting agricultural development; making justice independent of party affiliation (he claimed that no FRELIMO officials were in jail); creating opportunities for the young; and fighting HIV/AIDS.

[1](#)5. (C) In response to the Ambassador's question about violence in Sofala province involving members of his personal guard (ref b), Dhlakama said his men had been provoked. He blamed FRELIMO actions for the failure of his personal guard to integrate into the police force as called for by the 1992 Rome peace accord, saying that FRELIMO had not allowed successful integration of ex-RENAMO forces into the military and that the police remained entirely FRELIMO supporters. He said that violence would not be a problem in the election and that he, unlike Guebuza, did not want a violent campaign.

[1](#)6. (C) Comment: In this meeting, Dhlakama did not show the same focus that we understand he displayed in his meetings in Washington. He rambled at times, and some of his allegations against FRELIMO and Guebuza seemed to lack credibility. Dhlakama's statements to the Ambassador and to the press suggest that in the campaign he will avoid too-direct criticism of the popular Chissano but emphasize that Guebuza is not Chissano and position himself as the only alternative

to continued FRELIMO rule.

7.(C) Comment, continued: In the absence of reliable polls, it is difficult to be sure what outcomes are likely in the presidential and legislative elections. While RENAMO arguments that many people in rural areas are not sympathetic to FRELIMO and are less favorably disposed towards Guebuza than they are towards Chissano are at least plausible, RENAMO has done little campaigning, its candidates appear less polished than FRELIMO's, and it lacks the many advantages of incumbency. End Comment.
LA LIME